

Medical and Parenthood Leave of Absence is covered under various laws and labor agreements and may be either paid, or unpaid. You may be entitled to these leaves under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the California Family Rights Act (CFRA) and various provisions within your labor agreement, which is called a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

What does FMLA and CFRA provide for me?

The FMLA and CFRA provide job protection and continued access to health insurance coverage for up to 12 weeks during your eligible leave of absence. The FMLA and CFRA do not provide paid time off; however, your MOU may allow for continued pay in some cases.

You are eligible for leave under FMLA/CFRA if:

- You have been employed by the County for at least 1 year and;
- You have worked at least 1,250 hours during the past 12 months and;

You are requesting leave for one or more of the following reasons:

- An employee's serious health condition
- Care for the employee's child after birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care
- Employee's presence is needed to attend to a serious health condition of the employee's child, spouse, parent or a child of an employee standing in "loco parenties" who is either under eighteen years old or an adult dependent child incapable of self-care because of mental or physical disability.

The County shall determine if a request for Family Leave is valid within the parameters of applicable law.

Do I Get Paid?

- The MOU outlines whether or not you may qualify for continued County pay through the biweekly payroll process. Contact your Department Human Resources Manager for more information.
- In addition to, or in lieu of County pay, you may in some cases be eligible for short term disability (STD) payments provided to you through your employee

organization (union) or through the County.

- Managers, Attorneys, and Craft and Plant employees receive negotiated STD benefits through the County. See "The County Salary Continuance Plan"
- All other employees should contact your representing employee organization to find out about your STD coverage and requirements.
- County employees are not eligible for State Disability.

What Do I Do Next?

- Notify your supervisor and agency/department Human Resources representative that you wish to request a Leave.
- Contact your employee organization to inquire about STD benefits.
- Complete the necessary County and/or STD request forms and/or applications.
- Note: Your medical provider may be required to complete a portion of your STD application and/or County leave forms.

How Can I Continue My Health Insurance Coverage?

As you know, all changes to your benefits are processed through the County of Orange Benefits Center.

- To begin the process of continuing your health and other benefits coverage while on an unpaid leave, your department HR/payroll personnel must process your leave paperwork and input your status change and effective date into the County payroll system.
- Nothing can be done to continue and/or change your benefits until this important first step is entered accurately and in a timely manner into the system by your department.
- Once the County of Orange Benefits Center receives this system notification of your leave, you will be sent a personalized letter reflecting your new costs, options, and instructions for continuing health insurance and other coverage while on leave. (Be sure your home address is current in the County payroll system)
- Once you have made your elections through the Benefits Center, you will receive a monthly invoice and may continue with health insurance coverage as long as premium payments are made within the monthly deadline.

- Your share of costs vary depending on the type of leave, as noted below, and may change during the course of your leave as you move from various paid to unpaid, or FMLA to non FMLA leaves. Timely input of your status changes into the payroll system is key to ensuring you receive the correct costs and options for continuing your benefits.

Unpaid Family Leave (with or without union STD benefits):

- This means you pay only for your regular bi-weekly health premiums while off County payroll (if applicable) for up to 12 weeks

Unpaid Leave with County STD Benefits:

- This means you pay only for your regular bi-weekly health premiums (if applicable)

Unpaid Leave (without County Short Term Disability benefits):

- This means you pay the full monthly health premium, both County and Employee share, while off of County payroll

All County Paid Leave:

- This means your normal bi-weekly health premiums continue to come out of your bi-weekly payroll checks.

The County Salary Continuance Plan

- Forms are available on the Benefits Center website to those who qualify
- Once you and your doctor have completed your portion of the form, forward the form to HR/Employee Benefits, to the address on the form
- Employee Benefits will validate with your agency the last date you worked and when you exhausted your required annual leave and/or sick time.
- Employee Benefits will then fax your application over to The Standard Insurance Company for processing.
- The Standard Insurance Company will notify you if you have been approved or denied.

I want to come back to work, what is next?

- Contact your HR representative prior to your desired return date and follow their instructions for returning to work.
- Once your HR/payroll representative enters your Return From Leave status change and effective date

into the County payroll system, the Benefits Center will send you a personalized letter reflecting your new costs, options, and requirements (if any) and deadlines (30 days) for re-enrolling in or making changes to benefits coverage.

- Your new share of premiums (if applicable) will take effect the first of the month following the date of your status change.
- You must continue to pay all invoices through the month in which you return to work and you receive notification from the Benefits Center of your new costs and options.
- If your coverage was terminated while on leave, you may be subject to waiting periods and pre-existing condition exclusions once you return to work.

Additional Information relating to your life event or status changes:

Qualified Life Event:

You are permitted to make changes to your coverage if you experience a Qualified Life Event, QLE. A QLE is a change in life event such as marriage, birth or a divorce.

These qualifying changes are specified by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). **You have a 30-day period from the date of the event to notify the Benefits Center and make allowed changes as determined by the type of event.**

All changes must be made through the County of Orange Benefits Center. Changes made through your Medical Group or Health Plan directly are not valid.

Resources:

County of Orange Benefits Center

1-866-325-2345

Monday – Friday, 7:30 am – 5:30 pm, PST
www.benefitsweb.com/countyoforange/html

Coverage Options • Cost
Model Qualified Life Events, (QLE)
Planning Tools • Resource Materials
Assist with Eligibility • Take your QLE elections

Will require you to have your Social Security number and PIN number to access

Benefits Billing Services

1-877-588-0946

www.ceridianbenefits.com
Invoice & Billing Questions

The Standard Insurance Company

1-800-368-2859

Additional Resources:

Memoranda of Understanding (MOU):

<http://www.oc.ca.gov/>
Click on Human Resources
Click on Employee Relations
Click on MOU

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www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla
www.dfef.ca.gov/statutes/cfra.asp

HR Managers:

http://www.oc.ca.gov.com/hr/hr_contacts

PARENTHOOD LEAVE



*Informational brochure provided by
Human Resources, Employee Benefits to
assist you with understanding your
Parenthood Leave.*

